

## Endurance - Part 3

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by Van Knolton

In this series of articles we're looking at endurance from a very narrow scope to see a few things we can individually accomplish to increase our endurance in our Christian walk. In the first article we examined the first characteristic of **don't look back** using two examples of Lot's wife looking back to Sodom and the children of Israel looking back to Egypt after entering the wilderness. In the second article we examined **increasing our endurance** by seeing the vision of God's word especially as Joshua helped the Israelites picture the Promised Land so they would push forward and also as John tries to show us the vision of Heaven by telling us of its beauty and place of comfort. By seeing the vision of what is before us we focus on those things pulling our vision forward helping us to not look back.

Now let us consider that we must increase our endurance by **increasing our faith**. In 2 Timothy 3:10-12 [NKJV] Paul says *"But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra—what persecutions I endured. And out of them all the Lord delivered me. Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution."* As we see from Paul's example, persecution increased his faith which helped him to endure all things. In Philippians 4: 11-13 [NKJV] Paul says in whatever state he is in, he has learned to be content and that he can do all things through Christ who strengthens him. In this Paul is saying that he is able to endure all things because his faith in Christ enables him to endure.

In Acts 14: 21-22 [NKJV] the author tells us *"And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, 'We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.'"* They strengthened the souls of the disciples and exhorted them to continue in the faith; they knew that their faith must increase in order to continue just as in Acts 27:31 [NKJV] Paul told the centurion and the soldiers as the sailors were trying to abandon ship *"Unless these men **stay in the ship**, you cannot be saved."* We too must stay in the ship and complete our journey.

To increase our endurance we must increase our faith. To increase our faith we must feed our faith on the word of God. As we see in 2 Thessalonians 1:3-5 [NKJV] *"...your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other, so that we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure, which is manifest evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you also suffer."* Paul encourages the Thessalonians by telling them that he is thankful to God that their faith was growing, which as their faith increased so did their love for each other and their patience to endure sufferings in order to be counted worthy of the kingdom of God. This is evident that we too much increase our faith to increase our endurance to finish the race and be counted worthy.

Let us then consider **each day** to look forward to our reward in heaven by increasing our faith daily, by partaking of the strength we receive through feeding our souls with God's word, and helping each other finish our race with endurance.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** See again Van's first article, April 27, Issue 17, p. 2 and his second article, June 1, Issue 22, p. 2.

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